

Best Practices in Conversational Messaging for Financial Services



It took us about 3 months to research all of the different SMS apps for Salesforce and we finally decided on SMS-Magic. It has helped us in our business immensely. With today's reliance on technology, phones, and social media, consumers are much more willing to answer a text over a phone call. We have a 70% response rate with this text messaging app.

- Randall Mills,
Branch Manager, AmeriFirst Financial

Overview

Success in the financial services industry rests upon your relationship with your clients; your ability to understand their unique financial situations, to make their financial decisions easier and to respond to their needs quickly and effectively.

Text messaging is the perfect way to stay connected with your clients. It's fast, easy and the most widely used application on a smartphone.

Which is why financial services clients use text messaging; perhaps even prefer it, as their means of communication.

Using text messaging, you can respond to clients immediately, using the communication method they prefer. You can ask them questions, get approvals and even deepen your profiles of clients with online surveys. You can also automate the documentation process in a way that makes it much more efficient for your organization and simplifies your client's experience.

This whitepaper shares how SMS-Magic can give you all the benefits of text messaging while meeting or exceeding the regulatory requirements for documenting client interactions.

Yes, You Can Text and Meet Regulatory Requirements

Due to its growth in popularity, the [2017 Electronic Communications Compliance Survey](#) found that 42% of responding firms reported employees have requested to use text/SMS messaging for business purposes this year in comparison to 21% in 2016. However, the survey also found that non-email communications channels (including text/SMS messages) are the top risk concern for financial services compliance professionals.

Which is why many financial services firms don't allow text messaging between clients and their teams. They're required by law to maintain a record of every interaction with a

client—both inbound and outbound – and that's next to impossible with text messaging from personal phones.

The thing is, clients text financial services brokers all the time. They do so via their broker's personal device, forcing brokers to have to switch over to email to maintain the documented flow of interactions required by FINRA. The result: a fragmented experience for both brokers and clients that's difficult to manage due to a lack of visibility across the entirety of the conversation.

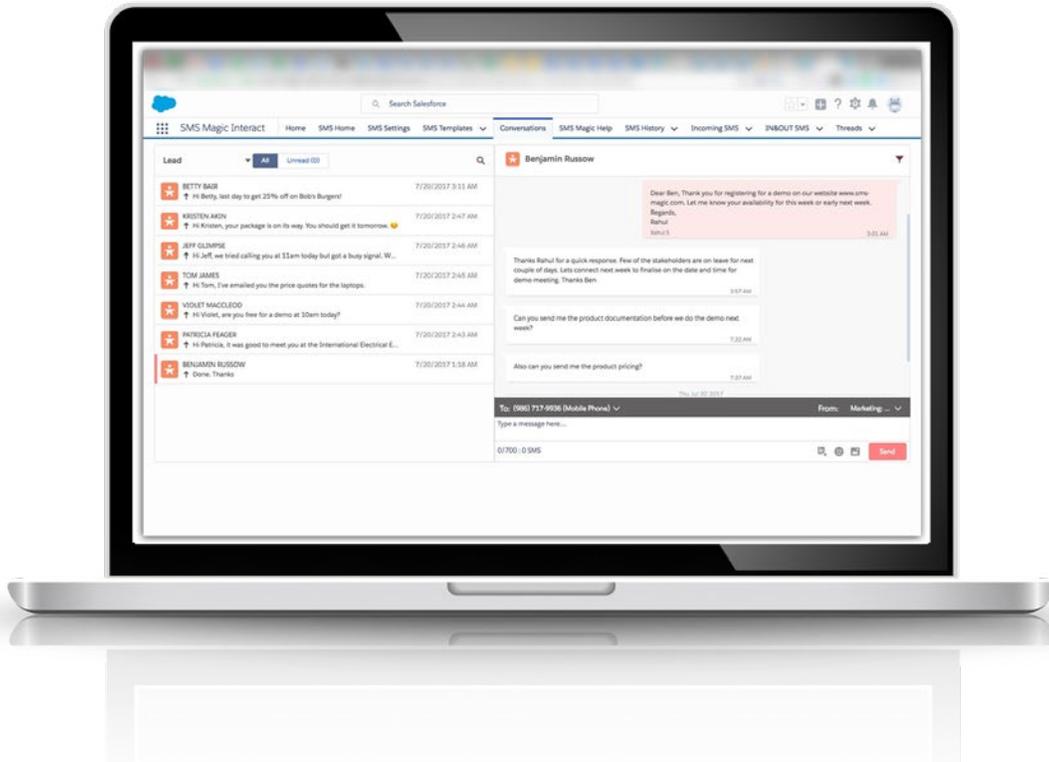
Until now, most financial service organizations have outlawed any form of text messaging. But that's changing thanks to advanced messaging solutions like SMS-Magic. This is good news for the 83% of firms that allow employees to use personal devices for business communications as the Salesforce1 application for SMS-Magic integrates seamlessly with your CRM, updating every message exchanged with a client.

So whether in the office on the desktop or on the go with smartphone in hand, your brokers can respond to clients quickly, in a compliant manner.

4 Ways Advanced Messaging Platforms Address Compliance

Advanced conversational text messaging solutions, financial services institutions can have the best of both worlds. Firms can allow brokers to communicate with customers as the customer wants via messaging and meet regulatory requirements for supervising and archiving all messages.

1. **360° conversational histories.** Every message is stored within the 360-degree history, whether it's from the Converse Desktop or from Salesforce1. This history is available to anyone who has the ability to view the associated lead or account record within the CRM.



2. **Salesforce/CRM integration.** Since all messaging data remains in Salesforce as the system of record, the interactive conversations are stored within the Salesforce database. When that database is archived, so are the conversations, meeting regulatory requirements for archival.
3. **Quick Restore or Search.** You can use the same Salesforce tools to locate and restore conversations, just as you would emails.
4. **Security.** The messaging platform also uses the permissions and security of Salesforce so all client communications are protected based on your pre-set security parameters.

Remove Compliance Concerns for Messaging

Text messaging enables brokers to communicate with and serve your customers faster—in the way they prefer. Whether by sharing updates as interest rates change, answering questions or keeping clients updated about the status of their loan progress milestones, the personalized and responsive service will be appreciated.

Messaging is only growing in popularity—for both your brokers and your clients. Empowering them smartly via an advanced conversational messaging platform that meets your needs for supervisory oversight and archival provides a proactive approach to keep pace with the market.

Considering that 67% of compliance professionals report a gap in confidence that their prohibition policies for SMS are actually effective, getting ahead of the problem—before FINRA decides to examine your firm—is a prudent business move.

Even better? Your brokers get to communicate with clients the way they want.

Communicate with Clients the Way They Want

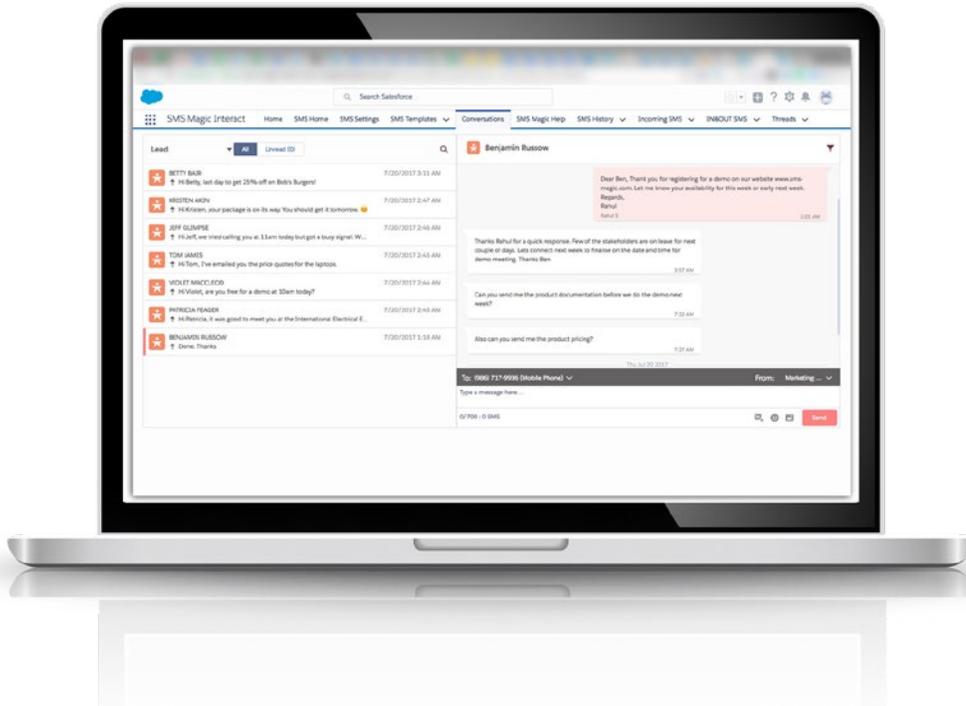
Your financial services clients want to know they can reach out to you and get a response, whenever they need one. That's why they so often send a quick text message to ask a question or make a request.

Thanks to SMS-Magic, you can respond quickly to their messages, whether you're in your office or on the go.

In the office, you can use the SMS-Magic Converse Desktop to easily manage and respond to every client message, regardless of the volume.

Converse in the Office

In your office, you'll have access to your Converse Desktop on your laptop or computer.



This intuitive, intelligent Desktop sorts and filters conversations for you, making it a snap to quickly locate and respond to messages from a variety of different clients.

- You can filter leads and customers any way you want, to find the specific conversation you want quickly.
- You can set alerts so that you are notified the moment a new message is received. That makes it easy to keep the conversations going in a natural flow.

Our 360-degree conversational history lets you see every message with a client. You can review that history anytime you want. It also makes it easy for your team to respond to a client request if you're unavailable. All they have to do is review the history to understand the context of the conversation.

Converse also saves you time by making it easy for you to update your Salesforce CRM directly from within the Desktop. You can edit records, events and tasks or create new ones. That's so much easier than bouncing between windows to update information.

Converse on the Go

When you're out for that client meeting, you can use SMS-Magic with Salesforce1 Mobile or use our app on your mobile phone.

All messages are synced back to the Converse Desktop and your CRM or database to maintain a complete history of every single conversation. You never lose a key piece of information or message again.

Now that we've covered communication, let's talk about another way to use text messaging to simplify the complexity of financial services.

3 Ways Text Messaging Simplifies the Loan Documentation Process

Whether you're processing a home mortgage, personal loan or financing a new car, the loan documentation process can take up a lot of your time. Tracking all the documents, helping clients understand them, and reminding them to get things signed and sent—it's a big undertaking for both you and your clients. And if a document falls through the cracks, it can send the whole thing off the rails.

Of course, your document workflow solution helps manage the flow of documents. Though it establishes the paper path from approval to funding, for the most part it leaves

communicating with the client up to you. With the average mortgage application file pushing 500 pages^[1], that's a lot of communicating.

Along the way, emails get missed, phone calls get ignored, and voicemails languish unheard. That means client managers have to personally get involved in tracking down documentation and pestering clients to send information, burning up valuable time.

Here's how an automated conversational text messaging platform working alongside your document workflow solution can help simplify the loan documentation process.

1. Text Messages Are Read

Let's face it; it's really easy to miss an email. It only takes a swipe to dismiss a phone call, and nobody wants to sit around listening to voicemails. This is not exactly ideal when you need to get a loan package to the underwriter yesterday. On the other hand, text messages get read and get responses fast.

- 99% of text messages are read within 3 minutes
- 50% of people respond within 90 seconds
- Text messaging gets a 6X greater response rate than email
- Text messaging gets a 10X greater response rate than voicemail

For these reasons alone, texting can make managing your loan document workflows much simpler and faster.

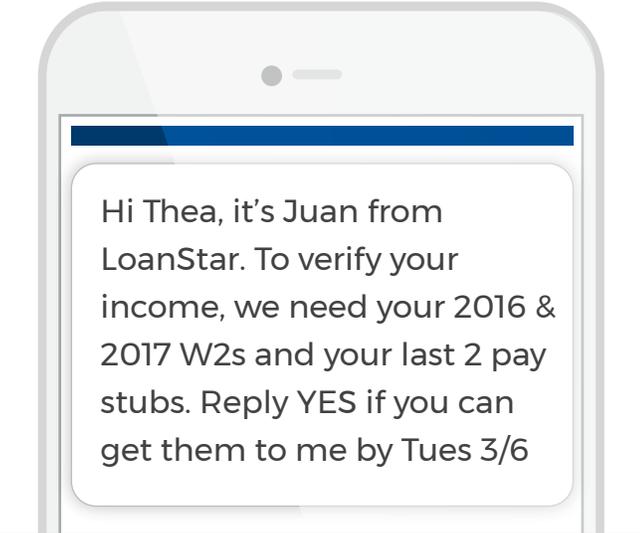
2. SMS-Magic Supports Automation

It isn't just the volume of loan docs that takes so much time, it's all the calls and emails you have to send along the way. With an advanced messaging platform, you can automate much of your routine notifications and reminders, saving you a significant amount of time.

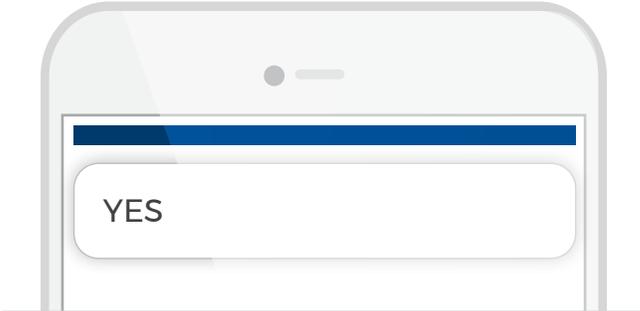
To accomplish this, you can set up a workflow that shows all the documents you need within your messaging platform. Then, you can set timeframes on when those

documents need to be returned, across the timeline of the workflow. You can set up text message reminders ahead of the due date for documents, as well as past due reminders. All of these reminder messages will trigger automatically until the document is received. Here's what that might look like for income verification:

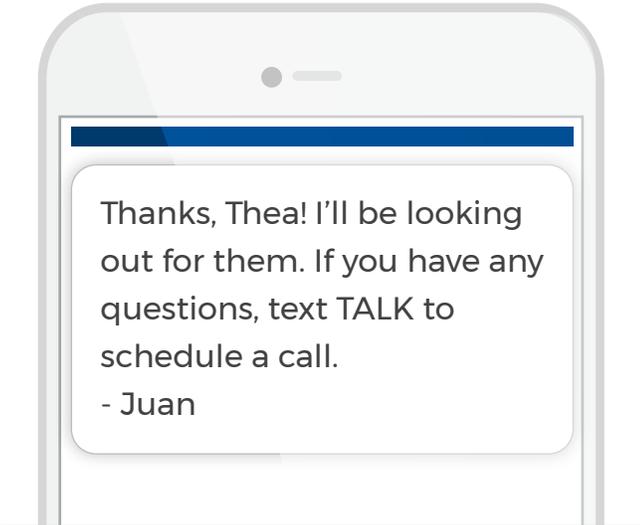
Loan Officer:



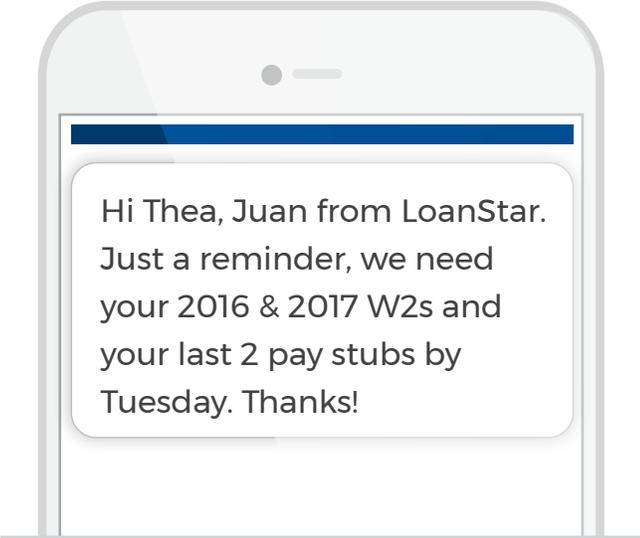
Client:



Loan Officer:

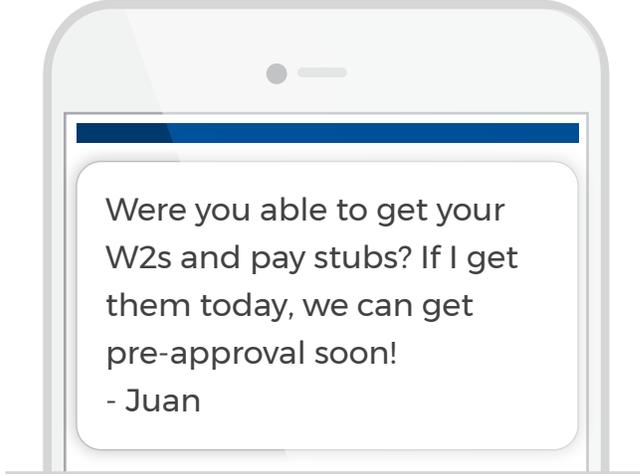


Loan Officer:



Hi Thea, Juan from LoanStar.
Just a reminder, we need
your 2016 & 2017 W2s and
your last 2 pay stubs by
Tuesday. Thanks!

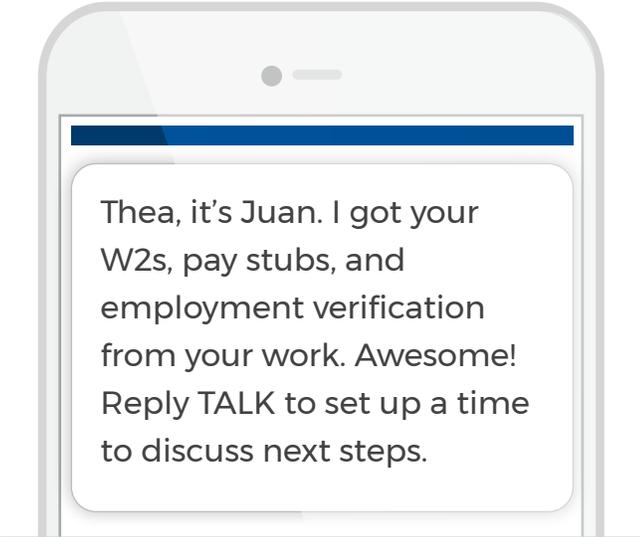
Loan Officer:



Were you able to get your
W2s and pay stubs? If I get
them today, we can get
pre-approval soon!
- Juan

[Client sends documents to your doc portal]

Loan Officer:



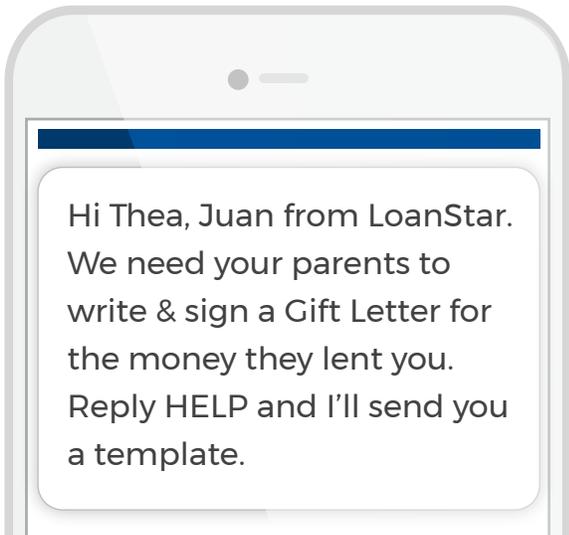
Thea, it's Juan. I got your
W2s, pay stubs, and
employment verification
from your work. Awesome!
Reply TALK to set up a time
to discuss next steps.

3. Texts Let You Provide a Personal Touch

As part of your reminder messages, you can include an auto-response keyword that clients can use to ask for help with the documentation. Which, as you know, they will definitely need.

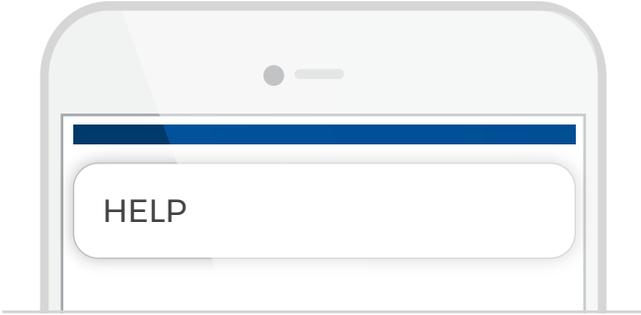
When they respond to the text with that keyword, their account manager is alerted and can immediately reply via text and set a time to discuss how he or she can help your client. For example, if your client needed to write a gift letter:

Loan Officer:



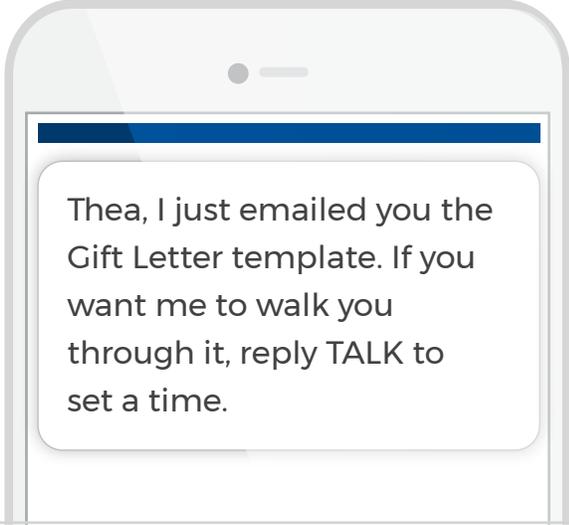
Hi Thea, Juan from LoanStar.
We need your parents to write & sign a Gift Letter for the money they lent you.
Reply HELP and I'll send you a template.

Thea:



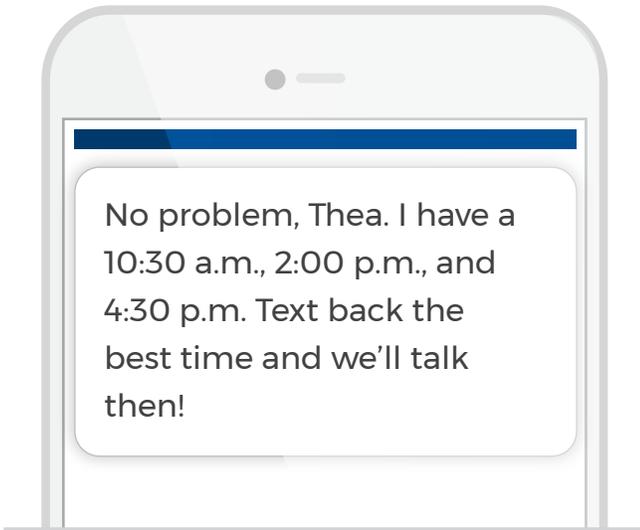
HELP

Loan Officer:

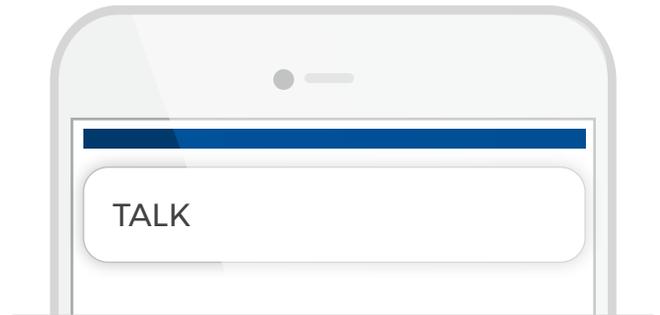


Thea, I just emailed you the Gift Letter template. If you want me to walk you through it, reply TALK to set a time.

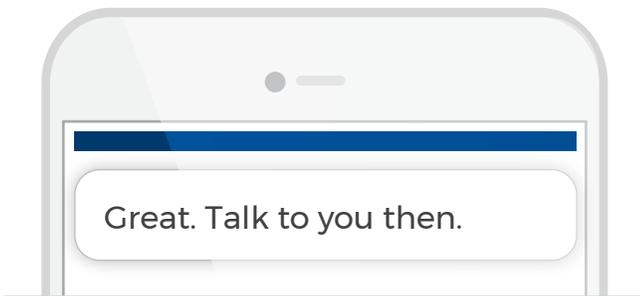
Loan Officer:



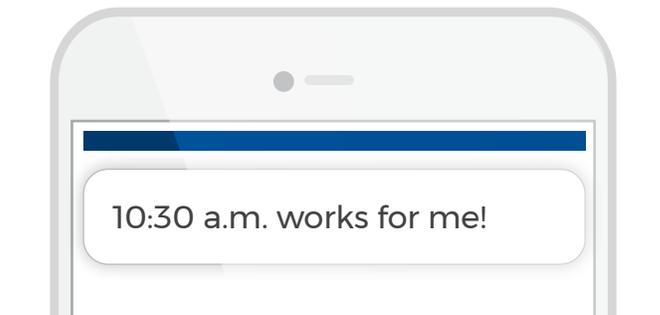
Thea:



Loan Officer:



Thea:



By automating reminders and the documentation process, you get back all the time you used to spend prodding clients to turn things in. With loan document packages as thick as your head, that's a lot of time to focus on what you want to do—help your clients reach their financial goals. With conversational text messaging moving things along, you'll also make the process faster, easier and more transparent for your clients, and have them raving about you to their friends.

The Bottom Line

Your clients want to converse with you through text messaging. It's their natural method of communication. Thanks to SMS-Magic, you can now respond to them wherever you are, whenever they need you.

Imagine how much your client responsiveness and satisfaction is going to grow.

Resource

[1] http://money.cnn.com/2013/12/12/real_estate/mortgage-applications/

About SMS-Magic

SMS-Magic is a proven, global messaging platform for Salesforce, with over 1500 clients across 190 countries, including small, midsize, and enterprise accounts. SMS-Magic enables Salesforce users to engage buyers and win and retain more new customer revenue, while creating strong customer relationships that drive sustainable competitive advantage. SMS-Magic is the most positively reviewed messaging application on Salesforce AppExchange.



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